

ISSUE 4

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CGENTERTAINMENT.COM

BRIAN PULIDO'S

Lady Death

TM

"The new incarnation of Lady Death may very well be the biggest hit of 2003!"

-ComicWorldNews.com



A MEDIEVAL TALE

BRIAN PULIDO

IVAN REIS

MARC CAMPOS

CHRIS BLYTHE



Lady
Death



Thorm
Gara



Obsidia



Cai

THUS FAR IN LADY DEATH

Amidst a harrowing battle between warrior knights and the otherworldly Eldritch, a child is conceived. Blood of both clans, she belongs to neither. Years later, the child, Hope, is reborn as Lady Death.

Char the Greelum delivers news of Lady Death's existence to Thorm Gara of the Eldritch. Thorm confronts his brother Tvarus, their ruler, but Tvarus dismisses him. Tvarus travels to Earth and seeing his daughter alive, gifts her with a dagger. His wife Obsidia secretly watches.

Lady Death is confronted by the Brothers of the Sword, a band of warrior knights. They subject her to an inquisition. She passes their tests, which incites battle. During the fray, their leader, Cai von Bach, levels a sword at Lady Death's throat and demands to know where his brother Wolfram von Bach, the rogue knight who trained Hope, is.



WOLFRAM
VON BACH IS YOUR
BROTHER?

YES, YOU
HEARD ME,
WITCH.

NOW
DROP THE
SWORD OR I'LL
SLIT YOUR
THROAT.



DROP
IT!



UGH!

I WON'T
TELL YOU
AGAIN.



FOR
THE LAST
TIME--

--WHAT
HAVE YOU
DONE WITH
HIM?



CAI, HOW
ARE YOU, BIG
BROTHER?

IT'S BEEN FAR
TOO LONG!

JOIN ME IN
A MEAL AND LET
US CATCH UP!

WHAT
IS THIS
CHARADE?



YOU'RE HUNTING
GAME INSTEAD
OF THIS FOUL
CREATURE?

YOU MUST BE
POSSESSED!



I'M SIMPLY
PLEASED TO SEE
YOU AND YOUR...
FRIENDS.

KEEP YOUR
DISTANCE!

HAVE YOU
ALIGNED WITH
THIS WOMAN,
WOLFRAM?



I HAVE.
WHAT OF IT?



SHE IS
ELDRITCH!

WE WERE
FORMED TO
OPPOSE THESE
CREATURES!



I NO LONGER
FIGHT FOR THE
CHURCH.

THE CHURCH IS TAINTED
WITH GREED AND HYPOCRISY,
MEN WITH LOW MORALS
AND LITTLE ETHICS.

YOU KNOW
THIS AS WELL
AS I, CAI.



YOU'VE
SIDED
WITH OUR
ENEMY?!



I'VE
DONE
NO SUCH
THING.

I FOLLOW
NO RELIGIOUS
ORDER BECAUSE
THEY CRADLE THE HOLY
MEN WHO PREY ON US
ALL. I'LL NOT BE A
PARTY TO IT ANY
LONGER.

I FIGHT
FOR GOD AND
ORDER, AND THIS
WOMAN BEFORE
YOU DOES THE
SAME.





WOLF,
HELP! I'M...
I'M SO
TIRED.



CAN'T YOU
TELL, BROTHER?
SHE IS MY PROTEGE.
I TRAINED HER. SHE
BESTS YOU BECAUSE
I HAVE ALWAYS
BESTED YOU.

THAT
IS NO
SPELL.



I HAVE
NO SPELLS
LEFT.

SHATTERING
THE SWORD
DEPLETED ME.



I AM **NOT** POSSESSED!
I'M FREE OF THE TYRANNY
OF BACK-STABBING
HOLY MEN!

SCHRAK



ENOUGH!

TAKE
THEM BOTH
ALIVE!

I'LL NOT
ALLOW THEM
THE RELEASE
OF A QUICK
DEATH!





MOTHER!

MOTHER...

A NIGHTMARE.

OH,
DEAR
LORD!

WOLF. WOLF,
WAKE UP! WE'RE
IN TROUBLE!

UGH!

HUH?
WHA...

PRESENTING
HIS EXCELLENCY...

...ARCHBISHOP
HELMUT VON
KRAKHAUER.

I DID
NOT FAIL.
THEY TESTED
ME AND I
LIVED.

I STAND
BEFORE THIS
CHURCH, I GAZE
ON ITS BEAUTY
AND I STILL LIVE.
HOW CAN I BE
ANYTHING OTHER
THAN A HUMAN?

THEN EXPLAIN
YOUR PALE SKIN.
YOUR SOULLESS
EYES. YOUR
STRENGTH.
EXPLAIN YOUR
DEFIANCE
TO ME!

GREETINGS,
LOYAL
SUBJECTS.

BEHOLD
THE ELDRITCH
EVIL IN OUR
MIDST.

YOU,
WITCH,
HAVE FACED
AN INQUISITION
AND YOU HAVE
FAILED.

SHE IS NOT
ELDRITCH!

KRAK

DO NOT
ADDRESS THE
ARCHBISHOP
DIRECTLY!

FORGIVE
POOR WOLFRAM,
SUBJECTS.

THE
ELDRITCH
WITCH HAS
POISONED
HIS MIND.

IS THIS
YOUR DAGGER,
WITCH?



IT IS.

BUT I
AM NOT A
WITCH.

I AM A
MORTAL!



THIS DAGGER HAS
ELDRITCH MARKINGS.
IF YOU ARE NOT
ELDRITCH, THEN
HOW DID YOU
GET IT?

I...I
DON'T
KNOW.



IS IT NOT
CLEAR, LOYAL
SUBJECTS?

THE WITCH DEFILES
THE CHURCH AND
IN DOING SO, GOES
AGAINST GOD'S
WILL!

WILL WE
STAND FOR
THAT?

NO!



STEADY, HOPE.
NOW ISN'T THE TIME
TO SHOW YOUR
MAGICAL SIDE.

BUT--

JUST
TRUST MY
INSTINCTS.



WOLFRAM
VON BACH, YOU
WERE AMONG
OUR FINEST KNIGHTS.
I GIVE YOU ONE LAST
CHANCE TO REPENT.



THIS
TRIAL, THIS
CHURCH, IS A
FARCE!



YOU
ARE BOTH
GUILTY!



WHEN THE
SUN RISES, YOU
WILL BURN AT THE
STAKE AS AN EXAMPLE
TO ALL WHO OPPOSE
THE CHURCH AND
GOD'S WILL.

YOU THINK
CONDEMNING THE
CHURCH WAS A
GOOD IDEA?



I DON'T CONDEMN
THE CHURCH, JUST THE
TREACHEROUS MEN WHO
WOULD RUN IT TO ITS RUIN.

GLAROND, REALM
OF THE ELDRITCH.



AM I
DISTURBING
YOU, MY LORD
TVARUS?

YOU
PRIVILEGE
ME WITH YOUR
CHILLING PRESENCE,
DEAR OBSIDIA.
HOW GOES YOUR
TWILIGHT?



VEXING,
MY LORD.

TELL ME
MORE ABOUT
LAST NIGHT. YOU
SAID YOU WERE
PAYING RESPECTS
TO AN OLD
FRIEND.

WHO
MIGHT THAT
BE?



DO YOU
RECALL MY
FATHER'S FATHER
ABERANOUS?

HE WAS
ONE OF THE
GREATEST SPELL-
CASTERS AND
WOMANIZERS
AGLAROND
HAS EVER
KNOWN.

WHAT
OF HIM?



I VISITED
HIS GRAVE AND
SOUGHT ADVICE ON
A SUBJECT THAT
HAS PERPLEXED
ME.



WHAT
SUBJECT?

THE
LOST ART OF
INVISIBILITY, OR
CLOAKING.

IS THAT
ALL YOU DID
LAST NIGHT,
LORD?



THAT
IS ALL, DEAR
OBSIDIA. THAT
IS ALL.

YOU
WOULDN'T
LIE TO ME,
WOULD YOU,
TVARUS?

NEVER,
DEAR.
NEVER.

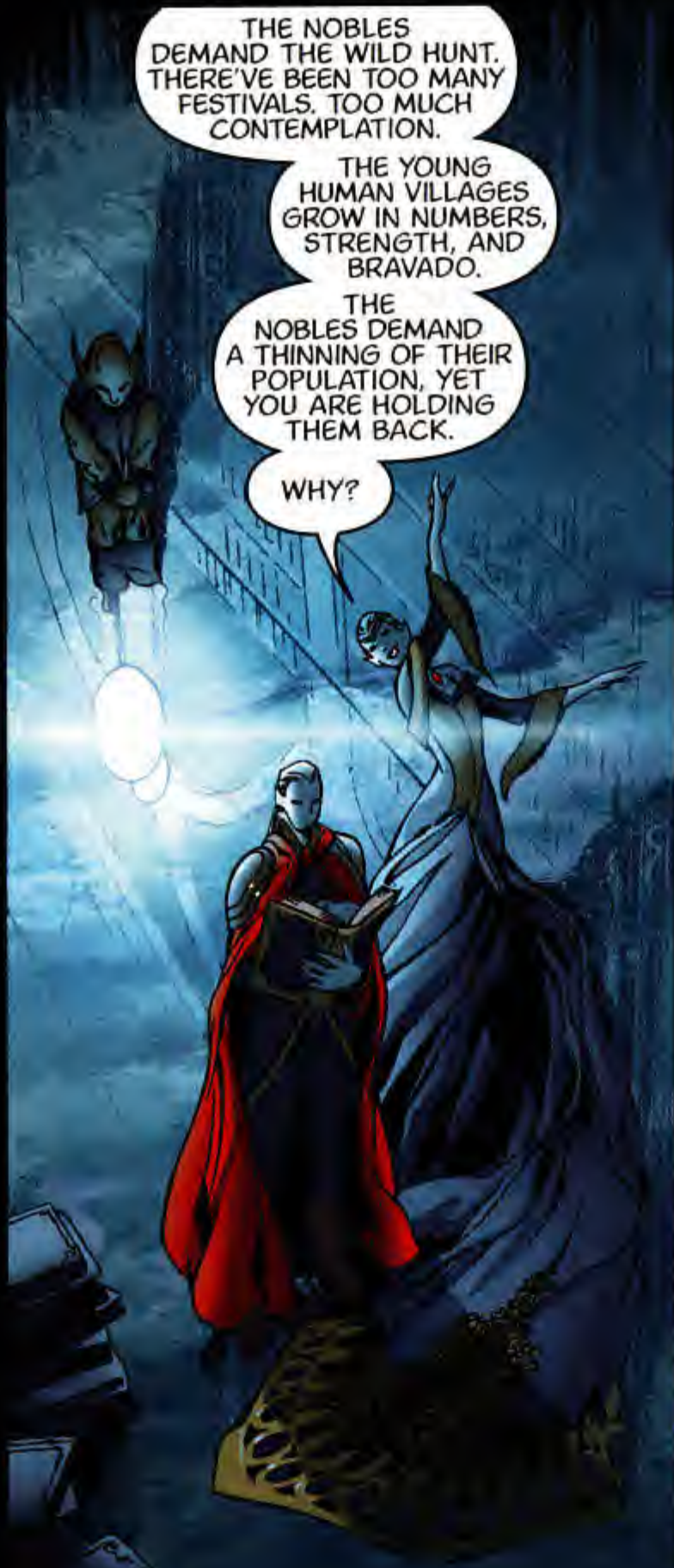
NOW
IF YOU'LL
EXCUSE
ME...

THE NOBLES
DEMAND THE WILD HUNT.
THERE'VE BEEN TOO MANY
FESTIVALS. TOO MUCH
CONTEMPLATION.

THE YOUNG
HUMAN VILLAGES
GROW IN NUMBERS,
STRENGTH, AND
BRAVADO.

THE
NOBLES DEMAND
A THINNING OF THEIR
POPULATION, YET
YOU ARE HOLDING
THEM BACK.

WHY?



OBSIDIA,
DON'T YOU *DEIGN*
TO QUESTION MY
LEADERSHIP.

NEVER, DEAR.
NEVER.

I
AM MERELY
WHISPERING
THE TRUTH
IN YOUR
EAR.

CAN
YOU HEAR
THE TRUTH,
TVARUS?

DO YOU
EVEN WANT
TO?



I DON'T
WANT ANY OF THIS.
I ONLY ACCEPTED
YOUR TRAINING SO I
COULD GET VENGEANCE
ON THE MEN WHO
MURDERED MY
MOTHER.



I SEE. YOU
RECALL THAT THEY
MURDERED YOU
AS WELL?



DON'T REMIND ME.
I CANNOT FATHOM
BEING THIS CREATURE
THEY CALL...LADY
DEATH.

WHY ARE
YOU SIDING WITH
ME? IT MEANS
CERTAIN DEATH
FOR YOU.

THE
SYSTEM IS
CORRUPT.

WHEN
I BECAME A
KNIGHT, I WAS
IDEALISTIC.

I WAS
HONORED
TO FIGHT FOR
THE CHURCH
AND ORDER.

BUT THEN I SAW
THINGS. KNIGHTS
PILLAGING VILLAGES.
CHURCHES TAXING THE
POOR. I SAW THAT WE
OF THE CHURCH WERE
NOT BETTER THAN
OUR ENEMY.

I STILL FIGHT
FOR GOD AND
HUMANITY.

BUT I
FIGHT ON MY
OWN TERMS.



YOU WON'T
BE FIGHTING
FOR ANY SIDE IF
THE ARCHBISHOP
GETS HIS WAY.

EVEN IF WE DO
GET OUT OF HERE, OUR
WEAPONS ARE GONE.



TRY A
SPELL.



IT'S NO
USE.

I FEEL
NOTHING--I MUST
HAVE USED IT UP
WHEN I SHATTERED
CAI'S SWORD.



OBSIDIA,
WHERE ARE
YOU?



WHERE
YOU LEAST
SUSPECT
ME.

BE
QUICK, OBSIDIA.
MY ABSENCE WILL
BE NOTICED.

CALM YOURSELF,
GREAT WARRIOR.



DO NOT
TOY WITH MY
AFFECTIONS.

I KNOW
BETTER THAN
TO DO THAT, THORM.
I SIMPLY THOUGHT
YOU'D ENJOY A BIT OF
USEFUL INFORMATION.



OBSERVE.



TVARUS' WANDERINGS
HAVE PRODUCED A HYBRID
CHILD OF ELDRITCH AND
HUMAN BLOOD.

GROUNDS FOR
REMOVAL FROM
THE THRONE, AS I
UNDERSTAND--

THIS IS
TREASON! BACK
IN NOVGOROD, I
SUSPECTED--



HOLD
ME, THORM. I
CANNOT BEAR
THE SHAME.

TVARUS HAS
FINALLY GIVEN
ME EVERYTHING
I NEED.











--NO!

WHERE NOW?

OH--!

WHAT'S--?



I BELIEVE
YOU WERE
LOOKING FOR
THESE?

FATHER!

TVARUS?



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Dulido
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Ivan
Reis
Penciler

Marc
Campos
Inker

Chris
Bythe
Colorist

Oscar
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CAN'T GET ENOUGH

CROSSCURRENTS

By Gina M. Villa

Some of you may have noticed that I was able to squeeze in a couple of letter columns last month. (I'm not counting Talk To The Monkey, which Po Po writes.) This month my aim is to do one for each of our monthly books — 13 of 'em. Since I announced that the letter pages would be appearing less frequently, I've gotten a *lot* of letters — some very eloquent — begging me not to let the letter pages go away for good. I have no intention of doing so, but much still depends upon you, our faithful readers. I wasn't kidding before when I said I was having a hard time coming up with publishable letters. So, what constitutes a publishable letter, anyway?

Primarily, the letter should be interesting. Don't just recap the comic book. Instead, comment on the parts you liked (or disliked) and tell me why you have that opinion. Ask questions. Speculate. Talk about the motivations of the characters, the direction of the storyline, whether the storytelling and script are comprehensible. **Why? Why not?** Share ideas about what you're hoping to see in the book. I want to have the kind of give-and-take in the columns that we see on the message boards. The responses won't be as quick, but good things come to those who wait.

ON THE LAM

By Ian M. Feller

Well, the biggest news of the past month has been MVCreations joining CGE. **Val Staples** is a dedicated guy who had worked for CrossGen as a freelance colorist in the past, so when he called and expressed an interest in bringing his studio to CGE, we had to take notice. Beginning in July, MVCreations will begin publishing through CGE. The first product to look out for is the **HE-MAN AND THE MASTERS OF THE UNIVERSE** trade paperback. This trade features the already-published first mini-series, plus some cool extras all in an affordable Traveler-sized package. If you have yet to try this series, here's a great opportunity to jump on board. Also in July is the **MASTERS OF THE UNIVERSE ICONS OF EVIL: MER-MAN** one-shot. After July, MVCreations has a whole schedule of books they will be releasing through CGE. The ones I'm most looking forward to are both based on Don Bluth-created video games I remember from the '80s: **DRAGON'S LAIR** and **SPACE ACE**. There's something special about a comic that takes me back to the days of my youth, the days when I'd save all my money to buy pizza, comics, and play video games. Ah, the good ol' days.

That leads me to the next biggest news of the past month, our parting of ways with our good friends, **Team Red Star**. There's been a wealth of speculation as to the reasons for our

CREATOR QUIZ

There must be at least one question that you've been dying to ask someone at CGE. If you want to see that question answered here, head on over to the Creator Quiz forum located at the CGE message boards (www.cgforums.com) and leave your question. As space allows, we'll post as many of those questions and answers as possible.

Asked by Question Mark: **Why aren't there any heroic trolls?**

Ron Marz: "Bohr probably seems pretty heroic to his own people, while humans see him as a villain. Heroism, like most things, is in the eye of the beholder."

Asked by Multi HMX-12: **What happened to the mentors whose Sigil-Bearers where kidnapped by the Negation?**

Barbara Kesel: "My, what an interesting question. Let's see: this means you've noticed that every Sigil-Bearer in the CrossGen Universe also gains a personal mentor, someone who seems obsessed with goading the Sigil-Bearer into situations that test them physically or emotionally. Good job. You've also noticed that **NEGATION** chronicles the tale of several Sigil-Bearers who were stolen from their worlds, presumably leaving behind mentors. Are those mentors confused? Worried? Relieved? Gosh, we haven't shown you a one, have we? What a good reason to keep reading **SOLUS!**"

Use a name, not a handle. I hate replying to a string of letters or numbers. Include your town and state or your email address, so we can all differentiate the Mary Smith who lives in California from the one who lives in Massachusetts.

Get your friends to write. Let's try to get a large cross section of our fans represented in the letter columns, not just the same loyal regulars who conscientiously give of their time every month, month after month, book after book. (I love you guys, by the way, and appreciate your effort.) Some of you who share your opinions on the message boards should know that I'm sure there's a big group of people out there who would also be very interested in what you have to say. After all, we sell thousands of books every month. How much more time can it take to jot down some of the things you talked about on the boards in a quick email to me? All it takes is a quick cut-and-paste. Contrary to popular opinion, not everyone has access to the internet. Why not expand your audience and be more inclusive at the same time? And, yes, I am going to post this message on the boards, too.

Meantime, I plan to publish letters every other month or so. If you don't see them in the books one month, you probably will the next.

split, but the truth is simple. After working together for six months, we all realized there wasn't really a *need* for us to work together. Team Red Star enjoyed the routine of self-publishing and no matter what type of help we could offer, they simply wanted to continue doing it on their own and worked best that way. We don't fault them, we're all still big fans of *The Red Star*, and we still love the whole team as family. Be sure you go out and buy all their issues, because you'll be missing something special if you don't.

This month marks the beginning of the second story arc, "Eye for an Eye," for R.A. SALVATORE'S *DEMONWARS* and is an excellent jumping-on point for new readers. Plus it features art by superstar-to-be Greg Tocchini. If for no other reason, pick up an issue to see this guy's pencils.

Well, no more time for reminiscing, I can hear footsteps on the stairs and helicopters overhead. I gotta make a break for it once again. Until next month, go out and buy R.A. SALVATORE'S *DEMONWARS*, THE *CROSSOVERS*, and BRIAN PULIDO'S *LADY DEATH*.



JEFF JOHNSON

- 1. What do you do for CGE?**
Whatever they tell me to do. Which often includes drawing *WAY OF THE RAT*.
- 2. Tell us about the project.**
It's an action adventure, martial arts mayhem, political subterfuge, slapstick fantasy kind of book. Oh yeah, and sometimes we have dragons.
- 3. Favorite comics you read?**
Anything where humans are puny and the villains are nefarious. More specifically, anything drawn by Alan Davis, Jose Luis Garcia Lopez, or Scott Kolins.
- 4. Favorite ice cream flavor?**
Every flavor but mint chocolate chip. What a travesty. That's the one ice cream I would describe as "nasty."
- 5. What type of car do you drive?**
A very non-descript sensible compact. I don't like to draw attention to myself.
- 6. Craziest convention experience?**
Mistakes have been made. Nuff said.
- 7. Caffeine or decaf?**
Every once in a while I'll try to escape the dark, sweet embrace of the mistress, but I never stray long. Cold lonely nights and too many pages to do by Monday create an inescapable bond with the Lady. You try and tell yourself that you can quit any time, that water is better for you, and eventually this horrible relationship will lead to kidney stones or worse. But what are you really going to do? That's right, you just pour another cup and pray for the dawn.
- 8. ESPN or CNN?**
SCTV
- 9. Hobbies?**
Sometimes I juggle but mostly I hang out with my dog.
- 10. Last good book you read?**
"Post Captain" by Patrick O'Brian. I've already read them all but I have to say that they are even better the second time around.
- 11. Favorite movie?**
Army of Darkness
- 12. Influences on your work?**
Life and everything I see.
- 13. Where are you originally from?**
I was born in Pasadena but I'm probably more of a northern Californian at heart.
- 14. If you could invite any four people to dinner, living or dead, who would they be?**
Socrates, Peter Sellers, Steve Jones and Dan Panosian. Now that's a freakin' party.
- 15. Music you listen to while you work?**
It really depends on what I'm drawing and how much coffee I've had to drink.
- 16. Leave us with some words of wisdom.**
Always look up.



Recommended Good Read

by CrossGen Chief Financial Officer, Mike Beattie

Amazing Spider-Man, published by Marvel Comics

Writer: J. Michael Straczynski, Artist: John Romita, Jr.,
Inker: Scott Hanna

Issue #51 features the long-awaited return of Mary Jane and her reunion with Peter Parker. After Aunt May found out Peter's secret identity as Spider-Man, she has been working behind the scenes to reunite comics' greatest couple. After a series of near-misses which convince both MJ and Peter that they'll never see one another again, things finally fall into place in issue #51. The two kiss, leaving faithful fans with the hope that they are back together for good.

READ THIS!